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ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 AID-07 INR-10 SS-15 CIAE-00 ICA-11
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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(☒) Release () Excise () Deny

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CINCSO FOR INTAFF, CINCLANT FOR POLAD

EO 12065: GDS 6/22/87 (KING, J.F.) OR-P
TAGS: PINT, MASS, AR
SUBJECT: () THE NEW MILITARY LINE ON VIOLA

1. [REDACTED] - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. AT LUNCH WITH CHARGE JUNE 19, GEN. ALBANO HARGUINDEGUY, FORMER MININT AND CURRENT POLITICAL ADVISER TO PRESIDENT VIOLA, SPUN OUT WHAT WE BELIEVE IS NOW THE MILITARY'S AGREED VERSION OF THE RUMOR-ED CONTRETEMPS BETWEEN VIOLA AND THE ARGENTINE MILITARY, RECENTLY REPORTED IN DAO CHANNELS. HIS VERSION OF WHAT REALLY IS HAPPENING IN THE INTRA-MILITARY DEBATE TRACKS ALMOST IDENTICALLY WITH THE PARTY LINE WE HAVE STARTED GETTING IN PAST TWO DAYS FROM ALL MILITARY SOURCES.

3. BRIEFLY, IT IS THAT THE RUMOR MILLS HAVE BLOWN OUT OF ALL RELATION TO REALITY THE DIFFERENCES OF VIEW THAT GROW QUITE NATURALLY OUT OF THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT SET UP HERE FIVE YEARS AGO, WHERE THE PRESIDENT IS THE AGENT OF THE JUNTA OF THE ARMED FORCES COMMANDERS. THAT BASIC STRUCTURE REMAINS AND WILL

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CONTINUE IN TACT DESPITE DIFFICULTIES, WHICH HARGUINDEGUY CLAIMED

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WHILE PAINFUL, COULD BE OVERCOME. THESE DIFFICULTIES, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BUT NOT NECESSARILY POLITICAL IN NATURE, STEM IN LARGE PART FROM ERRORS COMMITTED BY THE MILITARY SERVICES WHICH GUIDE THE PROCESS, HARGUINDEGUY ADMITTED. BUT THE "PROCESS" THE MILITARY WERE OBLIGED TO LAUNCH IN 1976 WILL CONTINUE THROUGH VIOLA'S TERM, WHEN THE ACTUAL TRANSITION WILL BEGIN THAT SETS THE STAGE FOR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN 1987.

4. HARGUINDEGUY FREELY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IF VIOLA PROVES HIMSELF INCOMPETENT TO RUN THE COUNTRY, THE JUNTA WOULD REMOVE HIM (BY A TWO-TO-ONE VOTE, IF NECESSARY) BUT OBSERVED THAT WOULD BE A DISASTER FOR ARGENTINA AND ITS IMAGE ABROAD. THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP WAS FULLY CONSCIOUS OF THESE COSTS. HE BELIEVED AND FERVENTLY HOPED THE MOMENT WOULD NOT COME, AND SUGGESTED INSTEAD THAT IN ANY REJIGGERING OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT THAT IS FOUND NECESSARY IN THE FUTURE, THE FIVE-MAN ECONOMIC CABINET WOULD BE THE VICTIM. HARGUINDEGUY, CLOSE FRIEND AND ECONOMIC DISCIPLE OF FORMER ECONOMY CZAR MARTINEZ DE HOZ, SAID DISMANTLEMENT OF MDH'S SUPERMINISTRY WAS ONE OF THE ERRORS COMMITTED. THE DECISION TO DO IT, HE ADDED, WAS VIOLA'S OWN, BUT ADDED CHARITABLY THAT THE THEN PRESIDENT-DESIGNATE WAS DETERMINED, AS PART OF THE POLITICAL OPENING HE IS AIMING FOR, TO DISTRIBUTE AUTHORITY THAT HAD BEEN TOO CENTRALLY LOCATED IN THE PERSON OF MDH. HARGUINDEGUY WAS NOT CHARITABLE IN HIS JUDGMENTS OF ECONOMICS MINISTER SIGAUT'S PERFORMANCE AND WAS BY INFERENCE CRITICAL OF THE PRESIDENT, WHO HE INDICATED MUST BE MORE FORCEFUL IN EXERCISING HIS AUTHORITY WITHIN THE JUNTA'S GUIDELINES AND TO BE SEEN BY THE NATION TO BE SO DOING. HE HAD COUNSELED PRESIDENT VIOLA TO TAKE A MORE FORCEFUL LINE IN PUBLIC AND TO PUSH HIS AUTHORITY TO ITS LIMITS WITHIN THE COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT, HARGUINDEGUAY SAID.

5. WITH ALL MILITARY SOURCES REPORTING HARMONY WITHIN THE
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SERVICES AND SATISFACTION WITH VIOLA'S ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS -- JUST WITHIN THE PAST FEW DAYS -- IT WOULD APPEAR THE HIGH COMMANDS HAVE SUDDENLY AWAKENED TO THE FACT THAT GRUMBLING IN FLAG- AND FIELD-GRADE RANKS NOT ONLY FURTHER WEAKENED VIOLA; IT ALSO DAMAGES THE PROCESS. SO THE WORD EVIDENTLY WAS PASSED DOWN THE ECHELONS TO BUTTON UP AND RALLY ROUND. INDEED AT LEAST ONE OF DAO'S SOURCES, ONLY A FEW DAYS AGO BADMOUTHING VIOLA, EXPRESSED SURPRISE IN HIS FLIP-FLOP THAT WE HAD SO MISUNDERSTOOD HIM. WE ALSO HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HARGUINDEGUY ACCEPTED WITH

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GREAT ALACRITY THE CHARGE'S LUNCHEON INVITATION, JUST TO REASSURE US THAT RISING TENSIONS AND SPECULATION AROUND TOWN ARE A TEAPOT TEMPEST. FREELY INVITING OUR QUESTIONS, HE ADMITTED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE CLOSURE OF THE CHILEAN FRONTIER BY ARMY CINC GALTIERI (ANOTHER ERROR) WAS UNILATERAL AND UNFORTUNATE, SINCE IT ONLY FED THE FIRES.

6. ON THE REGIME'S POLITICAL STRATEGY, HARGUINDEGUY REAFFIRMED WITH VIGOR THE KNOWN OBJECTIVES AND SCENARIO: A RESTRUCTURING OF THE CIVILIAN POLITICAL FORCES INTO THREE MAIN STREAMS--A RIGHT-OF-CENTER, A CENTRIST STREAM (GROUPED APPARENTLY AROUND THE RADICALS) AND A LEFTIST FORCE. IF THIS COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED, A COALITION OF THE CENTER AND THE RIGHT-OF-CENTER COULD HAVE A CONTROLLING DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY. (HE HAD SOME WARM WORDS FOR SOME OF THE RADICAL POLITICIANS, NOTING HIS OWN FAMILY'S ROOTS IN THE UCR.) THE NEXT THREE YEARS WERE INTENDED TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK. HE CITED THE NEW PARTY STATUTE WHICH WOULD BE COMING OUT NEXT YEAR AND THE PROGRESSIVE NORMALIZATION OF NON-PARTY INSTITUTIONS BETWEEN NOW AND 1984. HE WOULD BE WORKING ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE RIGHT-OF-CENTER FORCE. HARGUINDEGUY SAID THIS REMAINED THE STRATEGY-UNLESS "...TODO DERRUMBE." RUSER

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